

From: pstpeter@mindspring.com [mailto:pstpeter@mindspring.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 20, 2005 5:22 AM
To: ATR-Real Estate Workshop
Subject: Real Estate Is Competitive!
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Competition and the Real Estate Workshop" -- Comment, Project No.
V050015

Antitrust Division
U.S. Department of Justice
Liberty Place, Suite 300
Attention: Lee Quinn
325 7th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20530

To Whom It May Concern:

The Multiple Listing Service (MLS) that agents and brokerages use is a cooperative, broker-to-broker offer of cooperation and compensation that help both brokers and customers buy and sell homes. It is not a public utility, nor should it be.

The beauty of the MLS is that it allows real estate brokerages of every size to compete on a level playing field. It gives all of us access to an inventory of property listings that we are able to show and sell to our clients. All of us serve localized markets where we compete for business every day. Fierce competition is fueled largely by the uniquely intense and personalized nature of the service we provide to our clients -- which, in turn, determines our future success through referrals and return business.

The MLS doesn't discriminate. All MLS members are treated equally, regardless of their size or their business model, and yet the rights of property owners and their listing brokers are respected. The rules of the MLS achieve a delicate balance between respecting the rights of listing brokers so they will continue to be willing to contribute their inventory of listings and permitting cooperating brokers the ability to show those listings and be assured of receiving compensation if they bring about a successful sale.

Nothing encourages a competitive business environment more than providing consumers with choice. In the residential real estate marketplace, consumers not only are able to choose from more than 76,000 brokerage firms and more than 1.2 million REALTORSR, but also from a variety of business models.

With respect,

Pamela St. Peter

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Thank you!